

OUTLOOK

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER FOR FACULTY AND STAFF AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND AT COLLEGE PARK

MARCH 6, 1991

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 20

Resolution of the Board of Regents Authorizing Furloughs of Employees

Major Points

- Furlough contingency plan has been adopted for entire university system.
- Plan could take effect only if further cuts were requested by the Governor.
- There would be no reduction of employee benefits.
- No classes would be cancelled as a result of the furlough plan.

WHEREAS, the Board of Regents has responsibility for the governance of the University of Maryland System, including responsibility for establishment of personnel policies, subject to applicable provisions of Article 64A of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*; and

WHEREAS, the State of Maryland and the University of Maryland System have recently experienced severe budgetary cutbacks and may face the need to institute additional substantial reductions within the remaining months of Fiscal Year 1991; and

WHEREAS, a further reduction at this time of the fiscal year will require further reductions in personnel costs; and

WHEREAS, a furlough plan appears to be the most feasible option for achieving needed reduc-

tions within the several months remaining in Fiscal Year 1991, while allowing continued progress and advancement of the University System;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, if an additional reduction in the FY 1991 budget of the University of Maryland System is requested by the Governor, the Chancellor, as Chief of Staff of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of the System, is authorized to institute a furlough plan for all employees of the University System, including full-time and part-time faculty, non-faculty employees and staff, temporary, contractual and student employees, and shall inform the Board of the number of days of furlough required to satisfy the requested reduction; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT administering such a furlough plan shall be the responsibility of the Chancellor and of each chief executive officer of the System and shall be conducted within the following guidelines:

A. The plan shall be implemented with maximum flexibility to meet the needs of each employee and unit and to ensure the continuation of essential services with a minimum of disruption. A day of furlough may be arranged, for example, within the designated pay

period as a whole day, two half days, or as some other portion of a day (i.e., one hour per day for a number of days equivalent to a whole work day).

B. No reduction of employee benefits (e.g., retirement, health, leave) will result from a period of furlough.

C. Employees may not be required to be in their work area or to perform official duties during a period of furlough.

D. No classes may be cancelled as a result of implementing the furlough plan.

E. No new hires or promotions may take effect during the time any furlough plan is in effect.

F. No annual or other personal leave may be used on or in lieu of a period of furlough. Employees on or scheduled for leave during the period of furlough will not be charged leave during the furlough period.

G. No overtime or compensatory time may be granted to compensate for loss of the services of furloughed employees.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board of Regents takes this action with great reluctance and with the hope that it will not become necessary to implement it.

Approved February 27, 1991

Regents' Statement on 40-Hour Week

"On January 24, 1991 this Board approved a Resolution which imposed a 40-Hour Work Week on all employees. This resolution corresponded to an Executive Order issued by Governor Schaefer. Since that time the Governor has suspended implementation of the 40 Hour Work Week pending further study.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF REGENTS RESCIND ITS ORDER AND DIRECT THE CHANCELLOR TO STUDY THE ISSUE AND BE PREPARED TO PRESENT COURSES OF ACTION WHICH COULD ACHIEVE A FORTY HOUR WORK WEEK WITHOUT UN-ACCEPTABLE IMPACT ON THE PRESENT WORK FORCE."

Roger Blunt
Board of Regents
February 27, 1991

Approved February 27, 1991

Special Issue of *Outlook*

This special four-page edition of *Outlook* presents some of the issues involved with possible furloughs and the recent 40-hour work week question.

On page one the Board of Regents' resolution concerning furloughs is presented in its entirety. The regents' statement on the forty-hour work week also appears in its complete version. Both of these actions were taken at the regents' meeting on February 27, 1991.

On pages two and three an in-depth interview with President William E. Kirwan covers these and other current significant campus concerns.

Selected campus reactions to these issues can be found on page four.

Chancellor Langenberg's Furlough Remarks

Excerpts from Chancellor Donald Langenberg's Remarks to the Board of Regents, February 27, 1991

"...In order to spread the pain as thinly as possible, I am asking for your authorization to institute furloughs for ALL System employees as a principal cost-saving measure, if needed. **We will not implement a furlough plan unless required** [Emphasis added. Ed.]. I would note that one day of furloughs for all System personnel would allow us to return about \$1.5 million to the state.

"I think it is important that the System be authorized to furlough or not to furlough based on its needs. With your approval, I intend to request the state for this authorization, regardless of any furlough policy that the Governor may deem necessary for other state employees...."

Taking the Long View: An Interview with President William E. Kirwan



President William E. Kirwan

Last week, *Outlook* editor Roz Hiebert talked with President Kirwan about current problems and challenges for the university and his views on prospects for the future.

Q. Can you reflect on the mood of the campus community right now?

A. I would describe the past several months as our "winter of discontent." I'm, of course, referring to a celebrated novel by John Steinbeck, the title of which is derived from Shakespeare, but I feel as though it describes our situation as well. In fact, I'm hard-pressed to recall a time when so much bad news has befallen this campus in so short a period of time.

But, we've seen some encouraging signs recently. These signs should help to remind us that winter—even a winter of discontent—is always followed by a spring.

Q. Is the possibility of furlough days one of these misfortunes?

A. Until recently, there seemed to be a distinct possibility of a significant third cut to our FY 1991 budget. This would have required the university system to impose unpaid furlough days on all university employees.

The Board of Regents even prepared the university system for this possibility by putting in place a furlough policy. [Presented in this issue of *Outlook*.]

However, I am now quite

optimistic that the university will not be subject to any furlough days this year. My optimism is based on the fact that the governor and members of the state legislature are talking only in terms of cuts to all state agencies of no more than \$3 million. How much of this the governor might actually assign to higher education—if any amount at all—remains unclear. But even if another cut is necessary this year, College Park will probably end up with a figure of between \$200,000 and \$300,000. We could address this amount without resorting to any furlough days. This is good news and is one of those encouraging signs I mentioned a moment ago.

Q. What are some others?

A. The reversal of the decision on the 40-hour week, the end of the war and the potential effect on our economy, and the fact that, despite our economic troubles, we continue to make extraordinary faculty appointments.

Q. Can you mention any of these appointments?

A. Gene Roberts, former editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and one of the most acclaimed journalists in the nation, will join the College of Journalism this fall, and Bonnie Thornton Dill, one of the nation's leading sociologists, will be joining the Women's Studies Program.

Q. Can you discuss steps the university has taken to accommodate to the substantial cuts we've already incurred?

A. Yes, but first I'd like to look at what we are trying to accomplish through our planning process.

We've made some very significant progress in the past few years—progress in our efforts to improve our undergraduate education program, to recruit and retain outstanding students and faculty, to make College Park a more vibrant and diverse community. We must do everything possible to hold on to the initiatives that have produced these gains.

This is quite a challenge. We sustained a cut of over \$20.5 million in general funds this year. This cut will carry forward into FY 1992. In addition, we know that the FY 1992 budget will be cut at least an additional \$5 million. I believe strongly that we cannot just prorate these cuts to the various units. We must reduce—possibly eliminate—programs, services and activities in order to protect our priorities and our areas of excellence. We must

take whatever steps are necessary to maintain our momentum as an institution.

For this reason, I asked the four vice presidents to develop a plan that would address the assigned cuts in their respective divisions, while protecting, to the extent possible, their areas of higher priority. Within academic affairs, the Academic Planning Advisory Committee (APAC) is the primary group advising the provost on the cuts necessary in that division. APAC, in turn, has been guided by plans developed by the deans of each of the colleges in consultation with faculty committees.

Q. I understand these recommendations were to be presented to you on March 1.

A. That is correct. I expect to be able to review them over this weekend. Once I have studied the recommendations, I will present them to the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC). This group's charge is to assess the impact of the cuts from each of the four divisions—Academic Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Student Affairs, and Institutional Advancement—on the entire institution. It will not reassess priorities within any division or, for example, redo what APAC has already done. But it will advise me as to whether the cuts are too deep in any one division and, if so, which divisions would need to take additional cuts in order to undo excessive harm.

Q. What's the next step?

A. I will share the SPC's recommendations with the Campus Senate. If there are proposals requiring senate action, such as a recommendation to abolish a program, the senate will follow its established procedures for consideration of a possible program elimination. After the senate's recommendations come back to me, I will forward my recommendations for program elimination, if there are any, to the Board of Regents for its consideration. That would be the final step.

Q. What is the time frame for this process?

A. I've asked the SPC to present its recommendations to me by April 2. In the interim, I will stay in close communication with the senate executive committee. It is important that we proceed with appropriate deliberation, but we must also move in a timely manner.

Q. What would it mean to students and faculty if programs were eliminated?

A. That is an important question. It is essential that we keep this matter in perspective. First, it would *not* mean that existing students majoring in those programs would be left without a major. We would operate as we did when the General Studies program was elim-

inated—students who are majoring in a specific program would be allowed to complete their major. The elimination of the major would be phased out over time. It's also very important to note that even with the worst case economic projections, we have no intention of declaring financial exigency. This means that tenured faculty in these programs would be assured of their positions at the university, and would, after appropriate consultation, move to some related program or department.

Q. What about other full-time permanent employees?

A. They would be reassigned. In fact, this is one way in which we would be able to use program elimination to enhance priority programs.

Q. What about long-range planning?

A. Through APAC, we've had for some time an effective process in Academic Affairs for establishing and funding priorities, but no comparable process exists at the next higher organizational level of the university. I see this as SPC's role. I've given this committee the charge to develop a process that will enable the campus to reallocate annually one percent of our state-supported budget—in current dollars this amounts to about \$3.5 million. I am doing this because I believe it is important for us to have a process that enables the campus to reassess itself continually and redirect money from areas of lower priority to those of higher priority.

Q. Has the Enhancement Plan been put on hold?

A. The initial state funding for the plan has been lost through the budget cuts, so in that sense yes. Nevertheless, it is still a valuable document for the campus because it articulates both a vision for the campus and a set of priorities.

I've been extremely encouraged by the fact that both the Board of Regents and the Maryland Higher Education Commission have continued to support the plan as the number one priority for the university system. And in Annapolis, both the Governor and members of the General Assembly have restated their support for higher education and for the Enhancement Plan. So I believe that the Enhancement Plan will remain the highest priority for the system and the state and, when our economy improves, it will be funded in full.

Q. Will things get better as of July 1?

A. It will probably be two or three more weeks before we have a good sense of what our FY 1992 budget will be. But, in one sense, I am convinced things will improve on July 1. I believe the state's FY 1992 bud-

get will be based on very conservative estimates. This means that whatever money we have on July 1 should be available to us for the full year. As of July 1, it is my intention to remove all of the onerous, temporary restrictions on our use of funds. We may not like the bottom line number but, whatever it is, units will have flexibility restored in the use of their resources.

I also believe we will start to see the economy turn around in FY 1992. This means next year will be a year, hopefully, when we can begin to plan for increased funds.

Q. What do you think the mood of the campus should be right now?

A. It's inevitable that tensions, frustrations—even anger—should exist right now. There have been too many disappointments, too many setbacks, too much bad news coming our way. It would be unnatural for there not to be a sense of anxiety. Properly directed, I believe this anxiety can even be a healthy thing for the institution.

We are all having to do some soul searching about what is truly important for the institution. We are reassessing our priorities and developing a stronger sense of discipline over the use of our resources. In some ways, I believe we are developing a greater commitment to pushing forward with those things that are most important. It is essential that we accept and understand this period for what it is—a lull along our march to distinction. We must keep our sights set on what our long-term goals and aspirations are and what our prospects for the future—despite this difficult time—really are.

Q. Have you changed your personal vision for the future of the university?

A. Absolutely not. I don't think there's any reason to be discouraged—disappointed, yes—but not discouraged. We have to hold on to the expectation, not just that we have for College Park, but that the state has for College Park. This expectation, this dream, hasn't gone away. What has happened is that there has been a momentary downturn in the economy. The economy will turn back. I believe that the commitment to College Park on the part of the state is real, is deep and is lasting. If we can prevent our short-term frustrations from destroying our spirit and collegiality, if we can focus on our long-term prospects, then I believe we have every reason to face the future with a sense of confidence in the ultimate realization of our hopes and dreams for College Park.



Bruce Fretz



Josephine Withers



Wally Glasscock



Roberta Coates



Burt Leete

Campus Community Reacts to Regents' Vote to Authorize Furloughs

College Park faculty, staff and graduate students reacted with concerns, questions and tentative support to a Board of Regents' resolution passed on February 27 that approved a contingency plan for System-wide furloughs in the event of deeper cuts in the state budget for higher education.

Members of the campus community found the furlough plan a better alternative to dealing with the budget crisis than the rescinded 40-hour work week plan. However, they wondered whether other state employees would face furloughs as well and questioned whether a plan that maintained full service but at a lower cost is a good precedent.

"It's regrettable if it comes to that [furloughs]," said **Bruce Fretz**, professor of psychology and chair of the Campus Senate. "But furloughs are one of the lesser of the evils that could be used in solving the various difficulties that we face."

Two themes have emerged in Fretz' conversations with fellow faculty members.

"For faculty members, it's clearly a pay cut since faculty are not here for specific hours," he said. "You will do the same amount of teaching, research and writing on less pay."

However, a number of faculty members also are advocating the idea of higher paid faculty and staff members volunteering to take extra furlough days to assist low-paid staff members and teaching assistants who are less able to absorb paycuts, Fretz said.

"The suggestion speaks to a feeling of community at the university. In the presence of bad times, people are saying we should explore these kinds of options," Fretz said.

"I don't see an alternative to furloughs, but there are some concerns of equity with other state employees," said **Gerald Miller**, professor of chemistry and chair-elect of the Campus Senate. "If the university did it and no other state agency did, that would be a real morale buster for faculty and staff."

Miller saw the regents' provision that no classes could be cancelled as a result of furloughs as positive news for students.

"I have heard some comments, however, that there's no impact on the state, that we'll be offering the same service in terms of teaching at a lower cost. I would have voted for it [the no classes cancelled provision], but I'm wary of the idea," Miller said.

Unanswered questions about the plan remain, such as whether people and programs supported by outside grants would be affected, according to Miller.

Josephine Withers, associate professor of art history and chair of the President's Commission on Women's Affairs, echoed Miller's concern about whether the univer-

sities alone would absorb furloughs.

"It seems fair enough, if we have a plan that is equitably distributed throughout the state [workforce], one that isn't just for the universities," she said.

Withers, a critic of the 40-hour work week plan, found the furlough plan more palatable.

"This plan is a whole lot better than the so-called 40-hour week. There is less risk of this being instituted into a permanent [arrangement]," she said.

Withers said it remains unclear how faculty furlough time would be calculated under the plan.

Cindy Hale, director of administration in the computer science department and chair of the Staff Committee of the Campus Senate, felt the regents dealt with the issue in a sensitive manner but hoped the resolution doesn't serve to encourage furloughs.

"The regents certainly made an effort to make it as reasonable as possible, but they have made it easier for the governor to put them into place," Hale said.

Hale also felt furloughs shouldn't be exclusive to the university system. "If just campus people were furloughed, I think they'd feel singled out," she said.

In general, Hale said staff members she's talked with would find furloughs unwelcome but manageable.

"They're not horrified by the idea. They think they could deal with furloughs if they were distributed over time," Hale says.

Kathleen Maroney, office secretary III in McKeldin Library, agreed that furlough-related paycuts should be distributed over several paychecks.

"While it is tough, I certainly could live with the furlough if it is applied equitably across the board...[if] everyone takes the same penalty and has the same percentage loss of income," Maroney says.

Joan McKee, executive aide II in the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, wondered how workers who live "paycheck-to-paycheck" would handle furloughs.

"The resolution mentions 'flexibility,' and I think that's something that we should keep in mind when we try to determine how to deal with individual circumstances," McKee said.

Wally Glasscock, assistant director of human resources in physical plant, saw McKee's concern as a particular problem in his department. More than one furlough day in a single paycheck would cause serious problems for some workers, he said.

Roberta Coates, associate director of campus activities and president of the Black Faculty and Staff Association (BFSA), said members of the latter organization have mixed views on the plan.

"We want to help as much as possible, but there are members of the university community who have trouble making rent and day-care payments. I know there are terrible budget problems for the state, but we feel we are helping to bail out the state and having to bear the brunt of it," said Coates.

On the administrative side of the campus, **Burt Leete**, associate dean of business and management, said, "I think it's probably better to have some modest number of furlough days than to have budget reductions destroy programs or require people to lose jobs. Having said this, however, I fully recognize that if it does become necessary to furlough employees, the campus' morale problems will only increase," Leete said.

Frank Brewer, director of physical plant, wondered whether the plan could be fully implemented.

"One of physical plant's primary concerns is: Can the campus truly be shut down? The fact is there is an enormous amount of continuous ongoing research underway here and the researchers' expectations will be 'business as usual'," Brewer said.

Graduate students are wondering whether they would be included in a furlough program, according to **Wendy Ford**, a doctoral student in speech communications and a member of the Campus Senate.

"It'd be difficult to furlough graduate students unless classes were cut," she says. "If they do [apply to graduate students], many graduate students can't live without their graduate stipends. The stipend isn't much as it is."

Brian Busek
Tom Otwell



Frank Brewer